



## Creative Vitality Report



**A**thens of the South. Music City. Somehow, Nashville's nicknames capture our spirit, and that spirit is rooted in creativity and cultural expression. You see it everywhere - neon honky tonks on Lower Broad, coffee shops and eateries in 12South, shows and concerts everywhere from parks to libraries to our world-class Symphony Center. This creative hum attracts talented workers and innovative companies. They in turn invest in and participate in our cultural institutions and creative businesses. This creative ecosystem is, in many ways, the "secret sauce" of our great city.

## What is the Creative Vitality Index?

Every community can and should grow its creative edge. The Creative Vitality Index (CVI) was designed as a tool that states, regions and cities can use to benchmark their creative economy and cultural participation rates. Using readily available national data and indexes, the Creative Vitality Index shows the aggregate health and vigor of a community through a series of indicators.

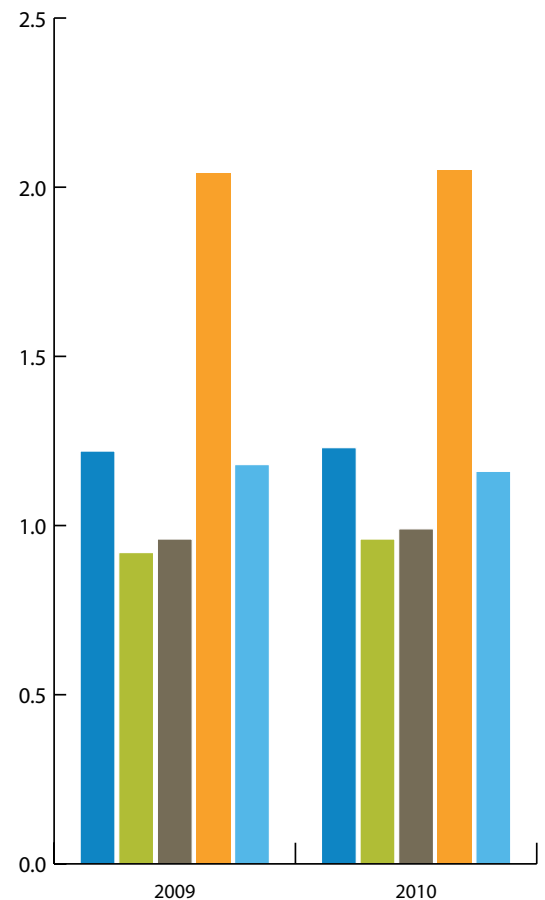
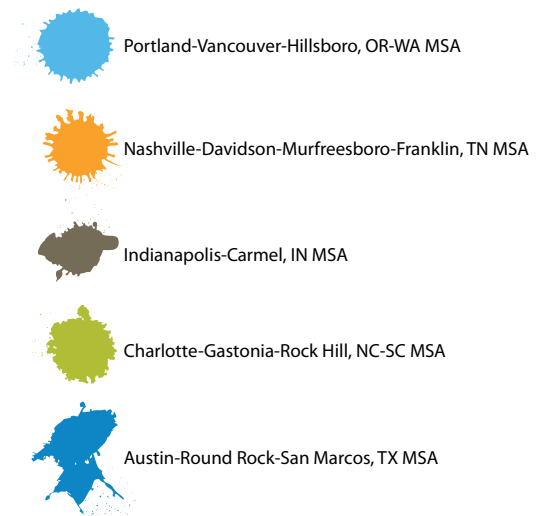
The CVI has two major components, the measurement of per capita artistic/creative EMPLOYMENT and multiple measures of cultural PARTICIPATION in nonprofit and for profit arts ventures:

- Income of not-for-profit arts organizations
- Income of not-for-profit humanities organizations
- Per capita bookstore sales
- Per capita music store sales
- Per capita photography store sales
- Per capita performing arts revenues
- Per capita art gallery and individual artist sales

These are weighted to produce an overall aggregate "score". The national baseline CVI score is 1.00. A region's score reflects a value relative to the national baseline; a score of more than 1.0 is considered to show a strong arts sector and economy.

## How Did Nashville Do?

Fantastic! Nashville's score rose from 2.04 in 2009 to 2.05 in 2010. We are the strongest arts economy in Tennessee and nationally, we rank 4th. Nashville retains the top Creative Vitality Index score in markets of similar population size.

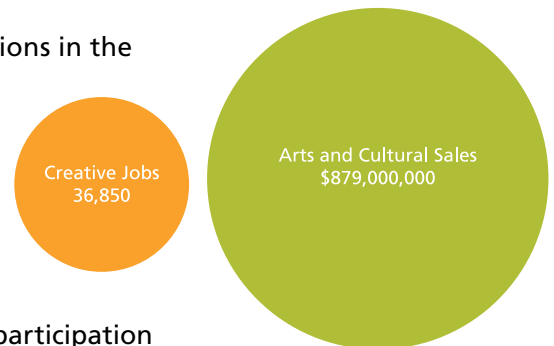


Source: WESTAF, Metro Nashville CVI™ Report 2010-Draft

# What Can We Learn from our Creative Vitality Score?

Compared to similarly sized cities, Nashville's creative ecosystem seems to be a key thread in its competitive edge and overall city brand. Despite national economic trending, creative life in Nashville continues to thrive. Key highlights include:

- There are 36,850 people directly employed in creative occupations in the Nashville region.
- More than 188 arts related nonprofits create, produce and exhibit in the Nashville MSA.
- Arts nonprofits generated more than \$88.8 million in revenues and direct economic impact.
- Nashville record, music, book and photography stores generated \$135,730,000 in revenue.
- Individual artists and art gallery sales netted \$738,833,000.
- Davidson County maintains one of the largest performing arts participation rates in the country - this includes attendance at paid concerts, theatre and musical performances. A rate nearly 5 times the national average.
- Nashville added jobs in key creative areas such as fashion design, film and video editing and set and exhibit designers.



## Where Does Nashville Go from Here?

Music City is a hub of creative life and growth. The Creative Vitality Index can act as guide for future public policy and economic investments in arts and culture.

- Continue investment in nonprofit arts organizations and related arts activities. In 2010, Metro Arts invested approximately 1.8 million dollars in area arts organizations. That investment leveraged a more than 80% ROI in direct sales and countless more in ancillary economic impact. The bottom-line, dollars invested in the arts create jobs and contribute to direct consumer activity in our region.
- Support quality arts education in schools and communities. Clearly, Nashville consumers support and love the arts. However, federal funding for arts education has been slipping for more than a decade. Exposure to the arts demonstrably increases test scores and prepares students through problem solving, critical thinking and cross cultural communication. Nashville art lovers spent over 135 million dollars in artistic purchases last year. Creating art lovers through classroom arts education programs like Music Makes Us, and after-school arts projects ensures that students not only perform in school, but continue to contribute to our creative economy as adults.
- Foster development in emerging creative employment sectors. In 2010, Nashville grew employment in fashion design, exhibit and set design and industrial design professionals. Larger markets saw dips in these occupations. This demonstrates a migration of talent to our great city. Clearly, music put us on the map, but the trend towards broad diversification of creative jobs will make Nashville stronger and help improve the strength of the entire creative sector. Identifying opportunities to invest in our evolving fashion, film, and design communities will result in new talent, new jobs and a continued employment diversification.
- Preserve and grow creative spaces and business enclaves. In order to stay strong, Nashville must be vigilant and innovative about creating places where innovation thrives. This means supporting new ventures like Parnassus Books or the Ryman Lofts. Nashville should activate public/private investments that generate creative business districts, art centers, performance venues and artist live-work spaces.

**For the full report or to see how Metro Arts is acting on these strategic priorities follow us on FB/Twitter or go to [www.artsnashville.org](http://www.artsnashville.org).**





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